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## Correspondence.

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**Public Reading of the Scriptures.** I have read with interest and profit the "Symposium" on the public reading of the scriptures in the February number of the OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT STUDENT. I have no desire nor intention of intruding unasked into this discussion, and though, like Elihu, "I am full of words," I shall not show mine opinion. But I do wish to suggest, Mr. Editor, that this is a large country, having a great many different sorts of people in it, and congregations of all sorts and sizes, and that what might suit the cultivated congregations of Chicago, Boston, New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia and Washington City, might not at all suit congregations in the "*mountainous destricts*" of Virginia, Tennessee and Alabama, the "Hoosiers" of the West or the "Crackers" of the South.

If I may be allowed to take the Rev. Dr. Newman's illustration, Suppose I were called on to read "Robert of Sicily" or Marc Antony's speech over the dead body of Cæsar, before him and gentlemen like him, surely it would be an impertinence for me, or any other reader, to preface or interlard the reading with comments. But suppose I were called on to read these pieces before an audience the most of whom never heard of Robert, or Marc Antony, or the great Cæsar, would it follow that even my poor comments were out of place?

If our "leading preachers," who constitute the "only class" whose opinions are of value on this subject, would only come to appreciate the fact that their congregations and congregations like theirs are not the only congregations in this broad land of ours, their opinions would be of more value than they are. If they would only remember that there are thousands of audiences that are densely ignorant of the Scriptures; that the language of the Bible (I mean the language of the English Bible) is almost an unknown tongue to vast numbers of people who know English only from modern school-books and newspapers; that these audiences care little or nothing for the dignified and orderly in public worship; that they gather for entertainment or instruction mainly; then the extended experience and observation of these "leading preachers" would indeed help those who need help in this matter. They would tell their inexperienced brethren that there was no "cut and dried" rule to guide them in all cases, and that even the preparation for commenting, if in any case comments were to be made, must vary indefinitely according to time, place, audience and other circumstances; that what would be prolix and intolerable under some circumstances, might be highly necessary, interesting and edifying under other circumstances.

Cannot the horizon of the ecclesiastical vision of the "leading preachers" in the great cities in some way be enlarged to take in the small towns, the villages, the outlying country "destricts" of these United States?

Yours fraternally,

RUSTICUS.

*Lexington, Missouri.*